



MURRAY
STATE UNIVERSITY

April 2016



Murray State University students spend Spring Break giving back: Ten representatives of Murray State University's Baptist Campus Ministries group pose for a photo during their recent spring break trip to St. Louis, Mo., where they spent their time doing multiple acts of community service throughout the city.

Four Murray State graduates named distinguished alumni

Four Murray State University graduates have been named 2016 Distinguished Alumni by the Murray State Alumni Association. David Beck, '77; Bill Cunningham, '66; Janice Padgett Harper-Smith, '63, '68; and Dennis Jackson, '66, '71, will receive their awards at the Distinguished Alumni Dinner on Friday, April 15.

"The award honors alumni who have excelled personally and professionally, contributed to their professions and impacted others," said Mark Welch, director of alumni relations at Murray State. The University presents the awards annually to alumni who have made meaningful contributions to their profession on a local, state and national level.

Beck received a degree in agriculture from Murray State in 1977 and currently serves as Executive Vice President/CEO of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation. He has been involved in all major state and national legislative and regulatory issues affecting agriculture and rural Kentucky for more than 39 years.

Cunningham is a Kentucky Supreme Court justice who has served on the state's highest court since 2006. A 1966 Murray State graduate, he was a member of the Sigma Chi fraternity and served as president of the Student Government Association, which helped lead him on his career path.

Harper-Smith is a music educator and vocal coach who is internationally renowned for her vocal performance and her work with professional singers. She earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in music education from Murray State in 1963 and 1968, respectively, while also receiving a national fellowship for postgraduate study in Europe. For nearly 20 years, Harper-Smith performed professionally, including operas and concert repertoire.

Jackson has served on the Kentucky Council of Postsecondary Education as well as the Murray State University Foundation, the National Alliance of Black School Educators, the Kentucky High School Athletic Association and the Western Kentucky Association of History and Social Studies Teachers. At Murray State, he played football and ran track as the first African American varsity athlete in 1960, and he has since been inducted into the Murray State Athletics Hall of Fame.

Murray State University student selected for prestigious Fulbright Award

Murray State University student Bryant Powell has been selected for a Fulbright U.S. Student Award in Belgium. As a Fulbright recipient, Powell joins more than 100,000 Fulbright U.S. Student Program alumni who have undertaken grants since the program began in 1948. The Fulbright program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government which is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. The primary source of funding for the Fulbright Program is an annual appropriation made by the U.S. Congress to the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Participating governments, host institutions, corporations, and foundations in foreign countries and in the United States also provide direct and indirect support.

Powell, a French major from Mayfield, is the second individual to have been awarded a Fulbright while a student at Murray State University. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic or professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential in their fields. The program operates in more than 160 countries worldwide. From the experience, Powell hopes to gain a broader sense of cultural awareness and a better grasp of the French language as well as the opportunity to help his graduate school application stand out.



Martin Luther King III speaks to campus, community



Martin Luther King III spoke at Murray State University's annual Presidential Lecture Series on Monday, Feb. 8, in Lovett Auditorium. King gave a 45-minute presentation entitled "Continuing the Legacy: The Civil Rights Struggles of the 21st Century," followed by a 30-minute question- and-answer session.

In his presentation, King talked about the strides that were made by the civil rights movement, thanks to leaders like his father, Martin Luther King Jr., as well as Rosa Parks and the many people who demonstrated and participated in Freedom Rides and sit-ins. He said his father's "I Have a Dream" speech

instilled hope in people as a "vision for what America could become."

He urged students to be engaged in the political process. In response to Gov. Matt Bevin's recent announcement of higher education budget cuts in Kentucky, he encouraged students to organize and "inundate legislators" with their presence and action. He even helped the cause by adding his signature to the Racers in Action petition.

Above all, he spoke about being the best that we can be. Like his father, he continually focuses on nonviolent action and strives to manifest positivity by choosing to see the good in people, believing in "the spirit of forgiveness" and not allowing hatred to win.

"We really are a great nation of great people, and if we can ever stop looking at elements that divide, and figure out 'how do we work together for a greater and better America – and really a better world?'"

That evening, Murray State University President Bob Davies reiterated the importance of unity and compassion saying, "We strive to provide our graduates with an array of valuable skills, including critical thinking and communication skills that will empower them to be active citizens in our global society."

John Ryan Nursing Scholarship established to honor alumnus

The John Ryan Nursing Scholarship has been created to help Murray State University students acquire an education in nursing. Developed by Dan Ryan, the namesake's younger brother and 1981 Murray State physics graduate, the scholarship will require \$25,000 for endowment.

Ryan wanted to honor his brother, whose life was taken by cancer in 2015, in a way that would have long-lasting impact. "A scholarship will help many students in the future fulfill their dream to complete their degree in nursing, and it will provide a living legacy for John," he said.

The scholarship will be available to full-time junior or senior students at Murray State who have a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale and have been admitted to the nursing program. The School of Nursing Scholarship Committee will choose the recipients, and preference will be given to male students, who are underrepresented in the nursing field.

A nursing graduate himself, John Ryan received his bachelor's degree from Murray State in 1974.

International graduate student receives opportunity to blog for U.S.News & World Report

Cathy Jane Van Lit, a Murray State University graduate student through the Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business, has begun blogging for the national publication U.S.News & World Report. Aimed at international students, her articles offer advice for those looking to attend college in the United States.

"It seemed like a great opportunity to create exposure for Murray State and to inform prospective students on various topics," said Van Lit. "Even though the articles are objective I can still use the knowledge and resources available here at Murray State University to prepare prospective students in the best possible way."

Van Lit has penned two posts for the publication. Her first article, "Do's, Don'ts for Talking to a U.S. College Recruiter," was published on March 1 and offered tips for talking to recruiters. She said that doing research before meeting with representatives is key for choosing a school that is the right fit.

Her second post, published March 16, continued the preparedness theme. "6 Factors for Prospective International MBA Students to

Weigh" recommends that graduate students look at factors such as accreditation and cost before deciding which program to attend.

Van Lit received the opportunity by responding to a call for international student bloggers that U.S.News promoted on Twitter during winter break. Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Don Robertson passed along the tweet to the Institute for International Studies, where Van Lit works as a graduate assistant.

Van Lit's recent blog posts can be accessed at <http://bit.ly/1RHH05O>



Cathy Jane Van Lit



Dr. Renae Duncan to serve as Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Current Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, Dr. Renae Duncan, is serving as the Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, effective April 1. Dr. Duncan took over for Dr. Tim Todd, who recently announced his return to the role of dean of the Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business at the end of March.

Duncan earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Maryland and her master's degree and Ph.D. from Florida State University, joining the Murray State faculty in 1993. She has served as a faculty member, academic department chair and associate provost at the University.